

Gulf of Mexico Alliance Environmental Education Network Steering Committee

Conference Call, Monday, April 23, 2007

Steering Committee Attendees

Linda Broussard for Gaye Farris, USGS NWRC
Quenton Dokken, Gulf of Mexico Foundation
Bryan Fluech, Florida Sea Grant
Gary Lytton, Rookery Bay NERR
Tara Schultz, Texas State Aquarium
Sharon Walker, USM
Ann Weaver, NOAA CSC
Lee Yokel, GOMA/DISL

Others

Becky Boudreaux, NOAA GCSC
Rafael Calderon, The Nature Conservancy, Texas
Alison Hammer, NOAA SPO
Ann Jochens, GCOOS/Texas A&M
Susan Martin, GCOOS/Texas A&M
Kris Shipman, Florida Extension
Tabitha Stadler, Rookery Bay NERR
Terry Teaque, EPA Gulf of Mexico Program
Tami Wells, GCOOS

Current Homework

- Communications Plan in development with the Public Awareness Campaign Working Group
- Examples of good scientist/media public forums send to Tabitha
- Preparation for upcoming joint GCOOS EOC/GOMA EEN meeting

Acronyms

GOMA = Gulf of Mexico Alliance
EEN = Environmental Education Network
EEC = Environmental Education Coordinator
EOC = Education and Outreach Council
GCOOS = Gulf Coast Ocean Observing System
JOIC = Joint Ocean Commission Initiative
PITs = Priority Issue Teams
UUP = Underserved and Underrepresented Populations

Agenda General Notes

1. Miscellaneous

- a. An update on the GCOOS Education and Outreach Council was presented by Sharon Walker. Tami Wells had just been hired and will be working with the EEN EEC. Dr. Walker noted it was a nice synergy between two organizations as well as other NOAA/EPA organizations, etc. The position is housed by the Gulf Coast Research Lab and funded through Texas A&M. Terry Teague would be adding Tami's contact information to various lists for contact purposes.

2. Working Group Updates

a. *Public Awareness Campaign* – A potential collaboration between JOCI and GOMA is in development. JOCI is the combination of the Pew Ocean Commission and the US Ocean Commission. At a meeting in California regarding the US Action Plan, GOMA was identified as a model held up for a working regional effort. JOCI was entertaining working with a region on pilot projects and agreed to entertain the Gulf region as a test bed. The current plan is to review how JOCI can support the phased public awareness campaign in development. A meeting was held on May 18, 2007 was held in DC at the Meridian Institute which works on behalf of JOCI. Attendees included Margaret Davidson, Louisa Koch, Laura Cantrell (JOCI/Meridian Institute), Bill Walker, Sharon Walker, John Dindo, and Lee Yokel as well as others. The Meridian Institute hired Spitfire Strategies, a media promotional group, to work with JOCI. They were present to see how our efforts could be combined. Several steps were identified and will be pursued.

b. Ann Jochens with GCOOS noted there were new proposals out to NOAA. A component would involve educating some E&O personnel in data management issues. Two other projects involved a modeling effort and expanding a network of datasets regarding surge and currents. They hope this will benefit many groups and be used to demonstrate to the public how things move in the ocean. They expect E&O to develop some products as 10% of the grant will go toward education projects. Dr. Jochens felt that the GOMA EEN and GCOOS EOC efforts compliment each other.

c. The Rookery Bay NERR held two rounds of Gulf Alliance Community Workshop in the last six months. The first one addressed Red Tide observational reporting as well as signage. Based on the communities response to the original Alliance workshops, local people are moving forward on identified issues.

The Rookery Bay NERR has also received an EPA Gulf of Mexico Program grant. It contains two components, a public outreach campaign working with the media and press (Naples Daily News – next phase of gulf in peril series) and a series of workshops identified through the other priority issues of the *Governors' Action Plan*. The plan is to increase gulf coverage and scientific accuracy of Alliance issues as well as making things stewardship oriented to help link communities across the gulf and share with other media outlets. Currently they are targeting a workshop that will be held in St. Petersburg in 2008. It will bring together scientists and journalists in a public forum. They are identifying good examples of how these relationships are working around the gulf and want to replicate them. If you have examples send them to Tabitha Stadler. The intention is for the two new contractors to work with Lee to include helping other PITs to accomplish their education related topics, helping to link local communities into Alliance.

Next steps for the public awareness campaign include working on a Communication Plan. Volunteers on this include Tabitha Stadler, Rafael Calderon, and Tara Schultz. They'll work on the plan and then send it back out to the group again.

Underserved and Underrepresented Populations - Bryan Fluech reported that they have a survey design in progress and have finished a diversity definition. They are revising the survey to target different agencies and find out who is actually working with UUPs.

a. At the upcoming EEN workshop in June Greg Ira, Richard Gonzales and Bryan Fluech would present information on this working group. They would present information on the Spanish and Science Club Network; the Florida DEP "Life" Program; and were working on speaker contacts regarding how to address UUPs. –

3. Network Workshop

The remainder of the conference call was dedicated to addressing the upcoming joint GCOOS EOC / GOMA EEN meeting June 18-20, 2007. Mike Spranger was present to represent the GCOOS EOC and reviewed their component of the meeting agenda. The GCOOS EOC agenda included GOMA people to join the meeting, international collaborations with Mexico and Caribbean Regional Association (CARA). Both GOMA and GCOOS were invited to participate in the other's meeting agenda. Currently representatives from both groups were working on the collaborative meeting details. Susan Martin with GCOOS was the contact for travel details. The Gulf of Mexico Program and NOAA NCDDC were supporting invited speakers. It was noted that this year the GOMA portion of the meeting was open as opposed to the previous year that was an invited group.

4. Set date for next call

The next Steering Committee Conference call is scheduled for: Monday, July 23, 2007

To view other Priority Issue Team Activities: <http://www2.nos.noaa.gov/gomex/>